

quizzing us on vocabulary or testing us on our school subjects. However, our grades don't matter as much to him as long as we try our best. His guidance in decision making is always helpful. On Thursday and Friday mornings he gets up early with my sister and me to help us get ready for band. He takes care of us when we are sick, comforts us when we are sad, and laughs with us when we are happy. Most of all, he makes each of us feel important and special in our own way.

My dad shows how caring he is through his service in the community. If anyone in the neighborhood needs help, my dad will help them with anything from taking care of a pet to vacuuming out a flooded basement. He is currently coaching four basketball teams because he feels all children should have the opportunity to play. During parish mission projects, my dad generously donates his time to assist however possible. During the shoe box drive at church, for example, he wrapped shoe boxes, bought needed supplies at the store, and cleaned up after everyone left. He has delivered furniture to a family in Roger's Park as well as packed peanut butter sandwich lunches for the needy. My father is a person who truly loves and cares for others.

My father tries to respect everyone. To me, respect is treating others the way you want to be treated no matter how they treat you. My father is very fair. He has probably learned that from raising four children. If he is going to let my sister stay up a little later, then he lets us all stay up a little later. He also gave everyone on my basketball team equal playing time this year. He is very polite and shows good sportsmanship. Being considerate, my father tries to think about how things will affect others. He is always open to new ideas and never laughs at things unless they are meant to be funny. If there was an award for the most patient and easy going person, I am sure my dad would win it. His positive outlook on life and his gentle ways of speaking win him others' respect. My father never yells at anyone. Instead, he talks things out and treats people with respect. He tries to bring out the best in everyone.

My father has a lot of responsibilities in his life, which he handles well. He is, first of all, responsible for his family. He works all day to provide for us. He also helps around the house doing various chores. His responsibilities as a father are endless. He also has a responsibility to love and be faithful to my mom. He is responsible for helping his parents and my mom's parents with things around their homes as well as with financial advice. Many of his responsibilities lie outside our family. He is involved in many of the decisions regarding our school's expansion project this year. He is on the finance committee at his old high school, as well as many committees in our parish. To fulfill his religious responsibilities, he attends church regularly, is a Eucharistic minister, makes financial contributions to the church, and tries to live out the Gospel.

My dad is a very important and irreplaceable part of my life. He has taught me much about life and has set my life on a good, strong foundation. I know that my dad will always be there to guide me, comfort me, help me, and celebrate with me. Next year, I will be starting high school. There will be many changes in my life. I know that things won't be as difficult because I have a great role model and coach walking with me every step of the way. Knowing my father, the best way to thank him would be to live my life as he has coached me, to be a caring, respectful,

and responsible person. With a coach like my dad and God on my side, I know I'll be a winner in the game of life.

#### VFW'S 100TH ANNIVERSARY

### HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 26, 1999*

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, in celebration of VFW's 100th anniversary, I want to recognize the efforts of this worthwhile organization that continues to assist tens of thousands of veterans, as well as their dependents and survivors. Today, the VFW's 2 million veterans, and its auxiliaries' 750,000 members, provide \$2.7 million annually in scholarships and awards to U.S. high school students. In addition, the VFW provides \$3 million annually for cancer research and \$15 million for veteran-service programs.

In Texas alone, there are approximately 174,452 retired military who have done their part in defending our country—we need to recognize their service. On Memorial Day, I will be presenting the Bronze Star Medal to Army Captain James Flowers who served our country during World War II. During an invasion of Normandy, Mr. Flowers lost both legs. The tragedy Mr. Flowers suffered should not go unrewarded.

I am consistently awed by the great sacrifice committed by so many of behalf of this great nation. Let us not forget the goals of the VFW as noted in the 1936 congressional charter: "To assist worthy comrades; to perpetuate their memory . . . ; and to assist their widows and orphans; to maintain true allegiance to the Government of the United States; to maintain and extend the institutions of freedom; and to preserve and defend the United States from all her enemies, whomsoever."

#### ESTABLISHING FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS WITH PACIFIC RIM COUNTRIES

### HON. PHILIP M. CRANE

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 26, 1999*

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation to encourage the establishment of free trade agreements between the United States and certain Pacific Rim countries.

H.R. 1942 directs the President to initiate preliminary consultations with the governments of each eligible Pacific Rim country to determine the feasibility and desirability of negotiating the elimination of tariff and non-tariff barriers in the context of a bilateral free trade agreement. If a positive determination is made, the President shall request a meeting at the ministerial level to consider the conditions under which formal negotiations regarding a free trade agreement could be commenced. The countries that may be considered for eligibility are the members of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation Group (APEC.)

Because open markets increase competition, eliminate inefficiencies, and result in lower costs to consumers and manufacturers, trade liberalizing agreements improve our prosperity and encourage the creation of secure, higher wage jobs. Sadly, the President's failure to support the passage of trade negotiating authority in this Congress has crippled the United States trade agenda and has brought a halt to the expansion of international markets for U.S. exports.

This legislation responds to the President's inaction by calling on him to investigate opportunities for negotiating free trade agreements with long time U.S. allies in working to increase economic growth through trade liberalization, both in the World Trade Organization and in APEC. Countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore, because of the largely open nature of their economies and their track record of supporting United States trade negotiating objectives, are countries which would be eligible immediately under the criteria established in this bill.

Building closer ties and coordinating with countries whose interests are largely friendly to the United States will have immense pay-offs as trade negotiations in APEC and the World Trade Organization proceed. Bilateral and multilateral trade agreement negotiations, such as the NAFTA, have been shown to exert constructive pressure on multilateral and regional trade negotiations. Bilateral trade talks enlarge common areas of agreement on trade rules and disciplines which can then be advanced more successfully in the context of larger negotiations among additional trading partners. This bill is all about finding opportunities wherever we can to break down barriers to United States exports and keep the trade agenda moving forward.

The real advantage of this legislation is that it will improve and expand our trade ties with countries in the Pacific Rim region and reassure countries that the United States, despite the absence of trade negotiating authority, is not turning inward and adopting a trade policy defined by narrow and inward-looking special interests. H.R. 1942 would direct the President to pursue aggressively more open, equitable, and reciprocal market access for United States goods and services. Continuing the pursuit of lower economic barriers and standardized rules and procedures governing international business will yield enormous benefits to our firms and workers. I urge my colleagues to join me in cosponsoring this important bill.

BOB COOK TURNS 80

### HON. WALTER B. JONES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, May 26, 1999*

Mr. JONES of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a constituent who has rendered great service to his country and his community and who will turn 80 on June 19. His family and friends will honor him at a surprise fete on Saturday, May 29, in Duck, North Carolina.

Robert (Bob) Cook worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for 26 years before he

retired in 1980. While there, he managed Price Support programs in honey bees, potatoes, turkey, milk and wheat. What that really means is he ensured that farmers received government assistance when they were economically devastated by a disaster. For instance, in the 1960s, our Western states were hit by a pesticide disaster which affected milk. All milk had to be poured down the sewer. Bob wrote the program to assist the farmers whose livelihoods were threatened by the loss.

Bob was born and grew up in Texas in a small farming community called Lampasas. He was the youngest of eight children, all of whom helped their parents who were ranchers raising sheep and cattle. After graduating from high school, Bob enrolled in Texas A&M but he felt his duty to serve his country before he could graduate. He left in his senior year to fulfill his duty to his country. He joined the Army where he served in Europe in World War II as a Quartermaster, supplying the front lines with food and other necessities. After the war, he returned to Texas A&M where he graduated. Bob then taught GIs returning from the war to become farmers and ranchers. He had an acute interest in raising sheep and soon he received a Masters Degree from the University of Wyoming which had an outstanding program in this area. He began his tour with the Department of Agriculture in San Francisco but was soon transferred to Boston. There he met his lovely bride to be, Dorathy Holmes, and married her 45 years ago. They moved to Washington, DC in 1954, both working for the Department of Agriculture. They lived in Alexandria, Virginia where they were active in community life, most particularly in their Jewel Street neighborhood. The "Mayor of Jewel Street and Aunt Doe" helped raise and supervise neighborhood children, many of whom have adopted them as grandparents. Many of those parents and children will be present at the celebration honoring their beloved "Uncle Bob" Memorial Day weekend at the Duck home of Mary and David Gordon: the Gordons' son Scott, daughter Jenifer and her husband Dave Tran; Eleanor Scott; Jean and Dick Donnelly and their son Jamie; Rosemary and Johnny Perdue; Joy and Don Earners; Ray Bailey and Alice Rowan and their two sons William and John; and Francis Urban. In addition many of Bob's friends in Duck will be in attendance. For years Bob and Doe kept their house on Jewel Street and split their time between Alexandria and Duck. In 1993, they moved to Duck permanently.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to have Bob and Dorathy as constituents and I ask that my colleagues in this chamber join me in thanking Bob for the many contributions he has made to his country and to his community and in wishing him a very happy birthday.

CONGRATULATIONS TO MS. BRENDA BRYANT ON HER RETIREMENT

**HON. MAC COLLINS**

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 26, 1999

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise on the occasion of the retirement of Ms. Brenda

Bryant from the General Electric Corporation. Ms. Bryant has served in a variety of capacities with the company over the past twenty years, including her current position as Executive Assistant to the Senior Vice President, GE Capital, Incorporated, Business Center Operations in Atlanta, Georgia.

Throughout her career with the Company, Ms. Bryant has been recognized several times for superior service and outstanding achievement. She first joined the General Electric team in Nashville, Tennessee where she worked for the Major Appliance Business Group Division and was the recipient of the "Manager's Award" for superior achievement. She rejoined the company after a move to the Washington, D.C. area where she worked in the General Electric Washington Patent Operation Office, and then later transferred to the Government Services Office where she received the "Lighting Award" for consistently high performance.

Since her move to the Atlanta GE Capital, Inc., offices, she has been the recipient on two occasions of the "GE Capital Bright Lights Award" for her outstanding work among fellow employees. So, after twenty years, Ms. Bryant ends her career with the General Electric Corporation on a high note.

Mr. Speaker, Ms. Bryant's professional achievements reach beyond her service to the General Electric Corporation. She has also worked as a real estate agent, a paralegal, and office manager for a firm specializing in combating organized crime. Throughout her professional career she has also made time to serve her community through volunteer work. She is a charter member of the Committee to establish the Macon, Georgia Cherry Blossom Festival; she has organized many charitable events and fundraising drives; she have volunteered at hospitals, local schools, homeless and women's shelters and the list goes on.

While her professional and volunteer activities are many, her accomplishments do not end there. Perhaps her most rewarding, and certainly most challenging successes have been in the trades she has practiced at home. As wife and mother of two children, her jobs have included girl scout leader, cub scout den mother, carpool manager, expert chef, homework and school project director, and creative family budget accountant. As general home manager, Ms. Bryant deserves special praise because the rewards of Mr. Bryant's fast-paced career over the years has required quite a few moves. In fact, over the course of thirty years, Mr. Bryant's position with the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco and Firearms has required the Bryant family to relocate to at least a dozen different cities, eighteen different dwellings and as many different schools. It has taken a special skill and complete commitment to make each of those a true home, and Ms. Bryant has met that challenge successfully each time.

We salute Ms. Brenda Bryant. Today she retires from a career that is filled with honors and achievements. But her outstanding career with the General Electric Corporation is but one part of this woman of many accomplishments. To her I say congratulations on a job, or actually many jobs, well done. And as she begins a new phase in life, we know that she already has her eye on the many challenging and rewarding jobs ahead.

McGOWAN HONORED

**HON. PAUL E. KANJORSKI**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, May 26, 1999

Mr. KANJORSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a close friend and a community and spiritual leader in Northeastern Pennsylvania, Monsignor Andrew J. McGowan. A community-wide celebration will honor Monsignor McGowan in June for his Golden Jubilee of Ordination. I am extremely pleased and proud to have been asked to participate in this significant milestone for a man who is a true treasure in our community.

A native of the area, Monsignor McGowan is fond of saying that his claim to fame is his famous brother, William McGowan, the founder of MCI. But those of us who know Monsignor McGowan know that he has made his own legacy in Northeastern Pennsylvania. He helped found Leadership Wilkes-Barre. He served as Community Affairs director for all the hospitals and colleges in the diocese of Scranton. He served as the vice-chair of Allied Services Hospital Foundation, the Commission on Economic Opportunity, and the Heinz Institute of Rehab medicine. He has served on so many community Boards of Directors that the list is too long for me to recount today. He has been a strong supporter of the new Luzerne County Arena since its inception and he currently sits on the Arena's Board of Directors.

Mr. Speaker, Monsignor McGowan is most renowned for his skill in public speaking and is the most sought-after speaker in Northeastern Pennsylvania, sharing his famous humor and insight with his audiences. Politicians such as myself who regularly attend the countless community events emceed by Monsignor McGowan look forward to his trenchant observations on life in Northeastern Pennsylvania, even though we know we are fair game for his good-natured, but barbed, wit. Even nationally-known humorist Regis Philbin once found himself upstaged by this deceptively-gentle man of the cloth.

This is not the first time Monsignor McGowan has been honored in this chamber, nor in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Among the many honors that have been awarded to him are the Distinguished Service Award of the Hospital Association of Pennsylvania, the B'nai Brith Americanism award, and the 1994 Award of Excellence of the Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania.

I have been privileged to work with this fine and distinguished individual many times before and after my election to Congress. His leadership, compassion, and understanding have always been an inspiration to me. Mr. Speaker, in addition to being among Monsignor McGowan's legion of admirers, I am very proud to call him a good friend. I send my most sincere best wishes for his continued good health and success, and join with the community in thanking him for his dedication to the people of Northeastern Pennsylvania.